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Resolutions on Reconstruction of the British Labor Party¹

I. THE TASK OF SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTION

THAT, in the opinion of the conference, the task of social reconstruction to be organized and undertaken by the government, in conjunction with the local authorities, ought to be regarded as involving, not any patchwork jerrymandering of the anarchic individualism and profiteering of the competitive capitalism of pre-war time—the breakdown of which, even from the standpoint of productive efficiency, the war has so glaringly revealed—but the gradual building up of a new social order, based not on internecine conflict, inequality of riches, and dominion over subject classes, subject races, or a subject sex, but on the deliberately planned coöperation in production, distribution and exchange, the systematic approach to a healthy equality, the widest possible participation in power, both economic and political, and the general consciousness of consent which characterize a true democracy; and, further, in order to help to realize the new social order and to give legislative effect to the labor policy on reconstruction, this conference emphasizes the necessity of having in Parliament and the country a vigorous, courageous, independent, and unfettered political party.

II. THE NEED FOR INCREASED PRODUCTION

That the conference cannot help noticing how very far from efficient the capitalist system has been proved to be, with its stimulus of private profit, and its evil shadow of wages driven down by competition often below subsistence level; that the

¹ These resolutions appeared in *The Survey* for August 3, 1918 and were published in conjunction with an article by Arthur Gleason which is embodied in a book, now in press, "British Labour and the War," by Arthur Gleason and Paul U. Kellogg; (Boni & Liveright, \$2.)

The resolutions as here given embody part but not all of the *proposed* reconstruction program of the British Labor Party entitled "Labor and the New Social Order." This document was a report on "Reconstruction" by a sub-committee of the British Labor Party and was published in full as a supplement to the February 16, 1918 issue of the New Republic. Comparison of the two documents will be of interest to many readers. Such a comparison will show for example that the document printed in this volume does not emphasize so specifically the disposal of "the surplus wealth for the common good,"—using surplus to mean that part of the national income over and above the national minimum of subsistence.

conference recognizes that it is vital for any genuine social reconstruction to increase the nation's aggregate annual production, not of profit or dividend, but of useful commodities and services; that this increased productivity is obviously not to be sought in reducing the means of subsistence of the workers, whether by hand or by brain, nor yet in lengthening their hours of work, for neither "sweating" nor "driving" can be made the basis of lasting prosperity, but in the socialization of industry in order to secure

- (a) the elimination of every kind of inefficiency and waste;
- (b) the application both of more honest determination to produce the very best, and of more science and intelligence to every branch of the nation's work; together with
- (c) an improvement in social, political, and industrial organization; and
- (d) the indispensable marshaling of the nation's resources so that each need is met in the order of, and in proportion to, its real national importance.

III. THE MAINTENANCE AND PROTECTION OF THE STANDARD OF LIFE

(1) That the conference holds that it is of supreme national importance that there should not be any degradation of the standard of life of the population; and it insists that it is accordingly the duty of the government to see to it that, when peace comes, the standard rates of wages in all trades should, relatively to the cost of living, be fully maintained.

(2) That it should be made clear to employers that any attempt to reduce the prevailing rates of wages when peace comes, or to take advantage of the dislocation of demobilization to worsen the conditions of labor, will certainly lead to embittered industrial strife, which will be in the highest degree detrimental to the national interests; and the government should therefore take all possible steps to avert such a calamity.

(3) That the government should not only, as the greatest employer of labor, set a good example in this respect, but should also seek to influence employers by proclaiming in advance that it will not attempt to lower the standard rates or conditions in public employment, by announcing that it will insist on the most rigorous observance of the fair wages clause in public contracts, and by recommending every local authority to adopt the same policy.

(4) That one of the most urgent needs of social reconstruction

is the universal application of the principle of the protection of the standard of life, at present embodied in the factories, workshops, merchant shipping, mines, railways, shops, truck, and trade boards acts, together with the corresponding provisions of the public health, housing, education, and workmen's compensation acts; that these imperfectly drafted and piecemeal statutes admittedly require extension and amendment at many points and supplementing by new legislation providing among other industrial reforms for the general reduction of the working week to forty-eight hours, securing to every worker, by hand or by brain, at least the prescribed minimum of health, education, leisure, and subsistence; and that, in particular, the system of a legal basic wage, introduced by the trade boards act, the miners (minimum wage) act, and the wage board clauses of the corn production act, needs to be extended and developed, so as to ensure to every worker of either sex, in any occupation, in any part of the kingdom, as the very lowest statutory base line of wages (to be revised with every substantial rise in prices), not less than enough to provide all the requirements of a full development of body, mind, and character, from which the nation has no right to exclude any class or section whatsoever.

IV. THE PROVISION FOR THE SOLDIERS AND SAILORS

That the conference realizes that, as soon as peace is assured, the position of the soldier or sailor will be one of great peril; that, whilst his services to the nation will be effusively praised, and promises will be made for a generous provision for his needs, there is only too much reason to fear that, unless a strong and continuous effort is made, both in Parliament and in the localities, administrative parsimony and red-tape will deprive many thousands of what is justly due to them.

The conference accordingly holds that it is imperative that the provision to be made on demobilization should not only be worked out in detail immediately, but that it should be published for general information, so that omissions may be detected, mistakes rectified, and everyone made acquainted with the steps to be taken.

The conference, noting the month's furlough, gratuity, free railway ticket, and a year's unemployment benefit if out of work already promised to the soldier, urges that

(a) there should be no gap between the cessation of his pay and separation allowance and the beginning of his unemployment benefit, and

(b) that this special ex-soldier's unemployment benefit given to all should be additional to any unemployment benefit under the National Insurance Act, to which many men are already entitled in respect of contributions deducted from their wages;

(c) That the amount of the unemployment benefit should not be the present starvation pittance of 7s. per week, but at least approaching to the combined separation and rations allowances; and

(d) that, in view of the change in the value of money, the gratuity (which should be made payable through the Post Office Savings Bank) ought to be, for the private, £20.

The conference feels, however, that what the soldiers will most seriously look to is not the sum of money doled out to them, but the provision made for ensuring them situations appropriate to their capacities and desires: it declares that this duty of placing the demobilized soldier within reach of a suitable situation at the trade union standard rate is one for the government itself to discharge, without the intervention of charity or philanthropists.

And the conference demands that the government should at once complete and make known the organization projected for fulfilling this duty, including appropriate arrangements for enabling such of the men as wish it to obtain small holdings, for others to get such training for new occupations as they require, and for all to secure such posts in productive work or service as they are capable of filling, or, in the alternative, to be maintained until such posts can be found.

V. THE DISCHARGE OF CIVILIAN WAR WORKERS

That this conference, realizing the grave industrial conditions in which demobilization will take place, demands that the same careful preparation and the same sort of provision should be made in advance for a systematic replacing in situations and for adequate maintenance until situations are found, with regard to the three million civil workers in war trades, and male or female substitutes for men now with the colors, as for the five millions to be discharged from the army.

VI. THE RESTORATION OF TRADE UNION CONDITIONS

(1) That this conference reminds the government that it is pledged unreservedly and unconditionally, and the nation with it, in the most solemn manner, to the restoration after the war of

all the rules, conditions, and customs that prevailed in the workshops before the war; and to the abrogation, when peace comes, of all the changes introduced not only in the national factories and the 5,000 controlled establishments, but also in the large number of others to which provisions of the munitions act have been applied.

(2) That the conference places on record its confident expectation and desire that if any employers should be so unscrupulous as to hesitate to fulfil this pledge, the government will see to it that, in no industry and in no district, is any quibbling evasion permitted of an obligation in which the whole labor movement has an interest.

(3) In view of the unsatisfactory character of the provisions in the munitions act dealing with the restoration of trade union customs after the war, the conference calls upon the government to provide adequate statutory machinery for restoration:—

(a) By securing that all provisions in the acts necessary to enforce restoration shall continue in operation for a full year after the restrictive provisions abrogating trade union rules, and giving munitions tribunals disciplinary powers over workmen have been terminated.

(b) By removing all restrictions upon the right of the workmen to strike for the restoration of the customs which have been abrogated.

(c) By limiting compulsory arbitration strictly to the war period and providing fully that the right to prosecute an employer for a failure to restore trade union customs shall continue for a full year after the termination of the restrictive powers in the acts.

(4) The conference further calls upon Parliament to limit all restrictive legislation directed against workpeople strictly to the war period, and, subject to the above exceptions, calls for the abrogation of the clauses restrictive of personal liberty in the munitions of war acts and in the defense of the realm acts, immediately upon the conclusion of hostilities.

(5) The conference, finally, urges that if it is considered that some of the rules, conditions, and customs are, in the industrial reorganization that is contemplated, inconsistent with the highest development of production, or injurious to other sections of workers, it is for the government, as responsible for the fulfilment of the pledge, to submit for discussion to the trade unions concerned alternative proposals for securing the standard wage and normal day, protecting the workers from unemployment, and maintaining the position and dignity of the crafts.

VII. THE PREVENTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT

That the conference cannot ignore the likelihood that the years immediately following the war will include periods of grave dislocation of profit-making industry, now in this trade or locality and now in that, when many thousands of willing workers will, if matters are left to private capitalism, probably be walking the streets in search of employment; that it is accordingly the duty of the ministry, before demobilization is actually begun, so to arrange the next ten years' program of national and local government works and services—including housing, schools, roads, railways, canals, harbors, afforestation, reclamation, etc.—as to be able to put this program in hand, at such a rate and in such districts as any temporary congestion of the labor market may require; that it is high time that the government laid aside the pretence that it has no responsibility for preventing unemployment; that now that it is known that all that is required to prevent the occurrence of any widespread or lasting unemployment is that the aggregate total demand for labor should be maintained, year in and year out, at an approximately even level, and that this can be secured by nothing more difficult or more revolutionary than a sensible distribution of the public orders for works and services so as to keep always up to the prescribed total the aggregate public and capitalist demand for labor, together with the prohibition of overtime in excess of the prescribed normal working day, there is no excuse for any government which allows such a grave social calamity as widespread or lasting unemployment ever to occur.

VIII. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

That to meet the needs of individuals temporarily out of work, the Labor Party holds that the best provision is the out-of-work pay of a strong trade union, duly supplemented by the government subvention guaranteed by Part II, of the insurance act; that the government should at once restore the subvention now withdrawn by one of the least excusable of the war economies; that this subvention ought to be increased so as to amount to at least half the weekly allowance; and that for the succor of those for whom trade union organization is not available the state unemployment benefit, raised to an adequate sum should be made

universally applicable in all industries and occupations where objection is not taken by the trade union concerned to the compulsory inclusion of its members.

IX. THE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION OF WOMEN

That the conference holds that the changes in the position of women during the war, in which they have rendered such good service, and the importance of securing to women as to men, the fullest possible opportunities for individual development, make it necessary to pay special attention in the reconstruction program to matters affecting women; and, in particular, the conference affirms—

A. With Regard to Industry on Demobilization:—

(1) That work or maintenance at fair rates should be provided for all women displaced from their employment to make way for men returning from service with the forces or other national work.

(2) That full inquiry should be made into trades and processes previously held to be unhealthy or in any way unsuitable for women, but now being carried on by them, with a view to making recommendations as to the conditions of their further employment in such trades.

(3) That all women employed in trades formerly closed to them should only continue to be so employed at trade union rates of wages.

(4) That trade unions should be urged to accept women members in all trades in which they are employed.

(5) That the principle of equal pay for similar duties should be everywhere adopted.

B. With Regard to Civic Rights:—

(1) That all legal restrictions on the entry of women to the professions on the same conditions as men should be abrogated.

(2) That women should have all franchises, and be eligible for election to all public bodies (including Parliament), on the same conditions as men.

(3) That systematic provision should be made for the inclusion of women in committees or commissions, national or local, dealing with any subjects that are not of exclusively masculine interest.

(4) That the present unjust provision of the income tax law, under which the married woman is not treated as an independent human being, even in respect of her own property or earnings, must be at once repealed.

X. THE RESTORATION OF PERSONAL LIBERTY

That this conference regards as fundamental the immediate repeal and abrogation, as soon as the war ends, of the whole system of the military service acts, and of all the provisions of the defense of the realm acts restricting freedom of speech, freedom of publication, freedom of the press, freedom of travel, and freedom of choice of residence or of occupation.

XI. POLITICAL REFORMS

That the conference reaffirms its conviction that no lasting settlement of the question of political reform can be reached without a genuine adoption of

- (a) complete adult suffrage, with not more than three months' residential qualification;
- (b) absolutely equal rights for both sexes;
- (c) effective provision for absent electors to vote and the best practicable arrangements for ensuring that every minority has its proportionate and no more than its proportionate representation;
- (d) the same civic rights for the soldiers and sailor as for the officers;
- (e) shorter Parliaments; and
- (f) the complete abandonment of any attempt to control the people's representatives by a House of Lords.

That the conference especially protests against the defects of the representation of the people act of last year, which failed to give votes to women under thirty years of age, denied them the right to sit in Parliament, maintained for both sexes an unnecessarily long period of residence as a qualification for the register, ignored the rights of the civilian electors who may be compulsorily away from home on polling day, and omitted any provision which would have prevented the scandal of large sections of the voters remaining unrepresented whilst members are returned to Parliament by a minority of the voting constituency.

It protests, moreover, against civil servants being denied the right, which has long been enjoyed by army and navy officers, without at once resigning their appointments, of offering themselves to the electors as Parliamentary candidates.

This conference calls for the abolition of the House of Lords without replacement of any second chamber. The conference further protests against the disenfranchisement of conscientious objectors.

XII. IRELAND

That the conference unhesitatingly recognizes the claim of the people of Ireland to Home Rule, and to self-determination in all exclusively Irish affairs; it protests against the stubborn resistance to a democratic reorganization of Irish government maintained by those who, alike in Ireland and Great Britain, are striving to keep minorities dominant; and it demands that a wide and generous measure of Home Rule should be immediately passed into law and put in operation.

XIII. CONSTITUTIONAL DEVOLUTION

That the conference regards as extremely grave the proved incapacity of the War Cabinet and the House of Commons to get through even the most urgently needed work; it considers that some early devolution from Westminster of both legislation and administration is imperatively called for; it suggests that, along with the grant of Home Rule to Ireland, there should be constituted separate statutory legislative assemblies for Scotland, Wales, and even England, with autonomous administration in matters of local concern; and that the Parliament at Westminster should be retained in the form of a Federal Assembly for the United Kingdom, controlling the ministers responsible for the departments of the Federal government, who would form also, together with ministers representing the dominions and India whenever these can be brought in, the Cabinet for Commonwealth affairs for the Britannic Commonwealth as a whole.

XIV. LOCAL GOVERNMENT

That in order to avoid the evils of centralization and the drawbacks of bureaucracy, the conference suggests that the fullest possible scope should be given, in all branches of social reconstruction, to the democratically elected local governing bodies; that whilst the central government departments should assist with information and grants in aid, the local authorities should be given a free hand to develop their own services, over and above

the prescribed national minimum, in whatever way they choose; that they should be empowered to obtain capital from the government at cost price, and to acquire land cheaply and expeditiously, for any of the functions with which they are entrusted.

The conference holds, moreover, that the municipalities and county councils should not confine themselves to the necessarily costly services of education, sanitation, and police, and the functions to be taken over from the boards of guardians, nor yet rest content with acquiring control of the local water, gas, electricity and tramways, but that they should greatly extend their enterprises in housing and town planning, parks, and public libraries, the provision of music and the organization of popular recreation, and also that they should be empowered to undertake, not only the retailing of coal, but also other services of common utility, particularly the local supply of milk, where this is not already fully and satisfactorily organized by a coöperative society.

Further, that in view of the great and growing importance of local government, this conference thinks it high time that the councilors should again be required to submit themselves for election that, on the first election, at any rate, the whole of each council should vacate their seats and the new council be elected on the principle of proportional representation, and that in order to throw the position open to all persons, rich or poor, all councilors should be provided with payment for any necessary traveling expenses, and for the time spent on the public service.

XV. EDUCATION

That the conference holds that the most important of all the measures of social reconstruction must be a genuine nationalization of education, which shall get rid of all class distinctions and privileges, and bring effectively within the reach, not only of every boy and girl, but also of every adult citizen, all the training, physical, mental and moral, literary, technical, and artistic of which he is capable.

That the conference, whilst appreciating the advances indicated by the proposals of the present minister of education, declares that the Labor Party cannot be satisfied with a system which condemns the great bulk of the children to merely elementary schooling with accommodation and equipment inferior

to that of the secondary schools, in classes too large for efficient instruction, under teachers of whom at least one-third are insufficiently trained; which denies to the great majority of the teachers in the kingdom, whether in elementary or in secondary schools (and notably to most of the women), alike any opportunity for all-round culture, as well as for training in their art, an adequate wage, reasonable prospects of advancement, and suitable superannuation allowances; and which, notwithstanding what is yet done by way of scholarships for exceptional geniuses, still reserves the endowed secondary schools, and even more the universities, for the most part, to the sons and daughters of a small privileged class, whilst contemplating nothing better than eight weeks a year continuation schooling up to 18 for 90 per cent of the youth of the nation.

The conference accordingly asks for a systematic reorganization of the whole educational system, from the nursery school to the university, on the basis of

- (a) social equality;
- (b) the provision for each age, for child, youth, and adult, of the best and most varied education of which it is capable, and with due regard to its physical welfare and development, but without any form of military training;
- (c) the educational institutions, irrespective of social class or wealth, to be planned, equipped, and staffed according to their several functions, up to the same high level for elementary, secondary, or university teaching, with regard solely to the greatest possible educational efficiency, and free maintenance of such a kind as to enable the children to derive the full benefit of the education given; and
- (d) the recognition of the teaching profession, without distinction of grade, as one of the most valuable to the community.

XVI. HOUSING

That the conference, noting the fact that the shortage of habitable cottages in the United Kingdom now exceeds one million, and that the rent and mortgages restriction act is due to expire six months after peace, regards a national campaign of cottage building at the public expense, in town and country alike, as the most urgent of social requirements.

That the attention of the government be called to the fact that, unless steps are taken to insist that the local authorities acquire the necessary sites, prepare schemes, plans, and specifications, and obtain all required sanctions, actually before the war ends there is very little chance of the half-a-million new

cottages urgently needed in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales during the very first year of demobilization being ready for occupation within that time.

That it is essential that the "Million Cottages of the Great Peace," to be erected during the first two or three years after the war ends by the local authorities, with capital supplied by the national government, free of interest, and a grant-in-aid in one or other form at least sufficient to prevent the schemes involving any charge on the rates, should be worthy to serve as models to other builders; and must accordingly be, not only designed with some regard to appearance, not identical throughout the land, but adapted to local circumstances, and soundly constructed, spacious, and healthy; including four or five rooms, larder, scullery, cupboards, and fitted bath but also suitably grouped not more than ten or twelve to the acre; and provided with sufficient garden ground.

XVII. THE ABOLITION OF THE POOR LAW AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUNICIPAL HEALTH SERVICE

That the conference notes with satisfaction the decision of the government both to establish a Ministry of Health and to abolish the whole system and organization of the poor law.

It regards the immediate reorganization, in town and country alike, of the public provision for the prevention and treatment of disease, and the care of the orphans, the infirm, the incapacitated, and the aged needing institutional care, as an indispensable basis of any sound social reconstruction.

It calls for the prompt carrying out of the government's declared intention of abolishing, not merely the boards of guardians, but also the hated workhouse and the poor law itself, and the merging of the work heretofore done for the destitute as paupers in that performed by the directly elected county, borough, and district councils for the citizens as such, without either the stigma of pauperism or the hampering limitations of the poor law system.

It feels that only in connection with such a reorganization of the local health services—urgently required to meet the dangers attendant on demobilization—can a Ministry of Health be of effective advantage to the nation.

XVIII. TEMPERANCE REFORM

That the conference records its sense of the great social evil and national waste caused by the excessive consumption of alcoholic liquors, and by the unfortunate intemperance of a relatively small section of the population; that the conference sees the key to temperance reform in taking the entire manufacture and retailing of alcoholic drink out of the hands of those who find profit in promoting the utmost possible consumption; and the conference holds that in conjunction with any expropriation of the private interests the electors of each locality should be enabled to decide, as they may see fit:

- (a) to prohibit the sale of alcoholic drink within their own boundaries;
- (b) to reduce the number of places of sale, and to regulate the conditions of sale;
- (c) to determine, within the fundamental conditions prescribed by statute, the manner in which the public places of refreshment and social intercourse in their own districts should be organized and controlled.

XIX. RAILWAYS AND CANALS

That the conference insists on the retention in public hands of the railways and canals, and on the expropriation of the present stockholders on equitable terms, in order to permit of the organization, in conjunction with the harbors and docks, and the posts and telegraphs, of a united national public service of communications and transport, to be worked, unhampered by any private interest (and with a steadily increasing participation of the organized workers in the management, both central and local) exclusively for the common good.

The conference places on record that if any government shall be so misguided as to propose, when peace comes, to hand the railways back to the shareholders, or should show itself so spend-thrift of the nation's property as to give the companies any enlarged franchise by presenting them with the economics of unification or the profits of increased railway rates, or so extravagant as to bestow public funds on the reëquipment of privately-owned lines, the Labor Party will offer any such project its most strenuous opposition.

XX. THE NEW ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

With regard to the generation of electricity for the provision, both for the factory and the home, of the cheapest possible power,

light and heat, the conference declares that the Labor Party stands for the provision, by the government itself, of the score of gigantic super-power stations by which the whole kingdom could be supplied, and for the linking up of the present municipal and joint stock services for distribution to factories and dwelling-houses at the lowest possible rates.

The conference notifies that the Labor Party will offer the most strenuous opposition to this great national service being entrusted, on any terms whatsoever, to private capitalism.

XXI. COAL AND IRON MINES

That the conference urges that the coal mines, now under government control, should not be handed back to their capitalist proprietors, but that the measure of nationalization, which became imperative during the war, should be completed, at the earliest possible moment, by the expropriation on equitable terms of all private interests in the extraction and distribution of the nation's coal (together with iron ore and other minerals).

The conference asks that the supply of these minerals should henceforth be conducted as a public service (with a steadily increasing participation in the management, both central and local, of the workers concerned), for the cheapest and most regular supply to industry of its chief source of power, the retail distribution of household coal, at a fixed price, summer and winter alike, and identical at all railway stations throughout the kingdom, being undertaken by the elected municipal district, or county council for the common good.

XXII. LIFE ASSURANCE

That the conference declares that, partly as a means of affording increased security to the tens of thousands of policyholders whose bonuses are imperilled by capital depreciation and war risks, and partly in order to free the nation from the burdensome and costly system of the industrial insurance companies, the state should take over (with equitable compensation to all interests affected) the whole function of life assurance, giving in place of the present onerous industrial insurance policies a universal funeral benefit free of charge; putting the whole class of insurance agents in the position of civil servants administering the state

insurance business; developing to the utmost the beneficial work of the friendly societies in independence and security, and organizing, in conjunction with these societies, on the most approved principles, a safe and remunerative investment of popular savings.

XXIII. AGRICULTURE AND RURAL LIFE

(1) That the conference regards the present arrangements for the production and distribution of food in this country, and the life to which many thousands of country dwellers are condemned, as nothing short of a national disgrace, and as needing to be radically altered without delay.

(2) That it is essential that the government should resume control of the nation's agricultural land, and ensure its utilization not for rent, not for game, not for the social amenity of a small social class, not even for obtaining the largest percentage on the capital employed, but solely with a view to the production of the largest possible proportion of the foodstuffs required by the population of these islands under conditions allowing of a good life to the rural population and at a price not exceeding that for which foodstuffs can be brought from other lands.

(3) That this end can probably best be attained by a combination of

- (a) government farms, administered on a large scale, with the utmost use of machinery;
- (b) small holdings made accessible to practical agriculturists;
- (c) municipal enterprises in agriculture, in conjunction with municipal institutions of various kinds, milk depots, sewage works, etc.;
- (d) farms let to coöperative societies and other tenants, under covenants requiring the kind of cultivation desired.

(4) That under all systems the agricultural laborer must be secured a healthy and commodious cottage, with sufficient garden ground, the opportunity of getting an accessible allotment, and, when he so desires, a small holding, together with a wage continuously adequate for the requirements of body and mind.

(5) That the conference suggests that the distribution of foodstuffs in the towns—from milk and meat to bread and vegetables—should, with equitable compensation for all interests expropriated and persons displaced, be taken out of the hands of the present multiplicity of dealers and shopkeepers, and organized by consumers, coöperative societies, and the local authorities working in conjunction.

XXIV. CONTROL OF CAPITALIST INDUSTRY

That the conference insists, especially in view of the rapid development of amalgamations and trusts, on the necessity of retaining after the war, and of developing the present system of organizing, controlling, and auditing the processes, profits, and prices of capitalist industry; that the economies of centralized purchasing of raw materials, foodstuffs, and other imports must be continued, and, therefore, the "rationing" of all establishments under a collective control; that the publicity of processes thus obtained has a valuable effect in bringing inefficient firms up to a higher level; that the "costing" of manufacturers' processes and auditing of their accounts, so as to discover the necessary cost of production, together with the authoritative limitation of prices at the factory, the wholesale warehouse and the retail shop, affords, in industries not nationalized, the only security against the extortion of profiteering; and that it is as much the duty of the government to protect the consumer by limiting prices as it is to protect the factory operative from unhealthy conditions, or the householder from the burglar.

XXV. NATIONAL FINANCE

1. That in view of the enormous debts contracted during the war, and of the necessity to lighten national financial burdens, this conference demands that an equitable system of conscription of accumulated wealth should be put into operation forthwith, with exemption for fortunes below £1,000, and a graduated scale of rates for larger totals, believing that no system of taxation only of income or profits will yield enough to free the country from oppressive debts, and that any attempt to tax food or the other necessities of life would be unjust and ruinous to the masses of the people.

2. That the only solution of the difficulties that have arisen is a system by which the necessary national income shall be derived mainly from direct taxation alike of land and accumulated wealth, and of income and profits, together with suitable imposts upon luxuries, and that the death duties and the taxation upon unearned incomes should be substantially increased and equitably regarded.

3. That the whole system of land taxation should be revised so that by the direct taxation of the unearned increment of land values effect should be given to the fact that the land of the nation, which has been defended by the lives and sufferings of its people, shall belong to the nation, and be used for the nation's benefit.

4. That this conference emphatically protests against the subjection of coöperative dividends to the excess profits tax and against the repeated attempts to bring coöperative dividends within the scope of the income tax.

5. That as during the war the government has had to come to the assistance of the banking institutions of the country, and that it has been found necessary to pay very high rates for the money raised, adding considerably to the annual burden resulting from the war, whilst the banks are now pursuing a policy of fusion such as brings them near to the position of a monopoly, the Post Office Savings Bank should be developed into a national banking system for the common service of the whole community.

XXVI. THE NEED FOR A "PEACE BOOK"

That in the opinion of this conference the problem of the social and industrial reconstruction of Great Britain after the war is of such grave importance and of such vital urgency, that it is imperative, in order to avoid confusion in the period of demobilization, that the main outlines of policy in all branches should be definitely formulated, upon the responsibility of the minister of reconstruction, before the war ends, so that they can be published in a Peace Book for public criticism before being finally adopted by the Cabinet, for the authoritative guidance of all ministers and heads of departments.

XXVII. "LABOR AND THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER"

That the draft report on reconstruction, entitled Labor and the New Social Order, be revised after consideration of all the amendments suggested, and in accordance with the decisions of the conference, and that every constituent organization be asked to report within four weeks how many copies it proposes to order for distribution to its branches and members.